

EDAD 639 – Administrative Practicum
Chadron State College
Reflection #3
Kellen Conroy
January 31, 2015

Administrative Log: December 2014 – January 2015

Documented Learning Experiences:

1. ESU #1 Business Manager Interview (Lisa Salmon) – Dr. Bob Uhing, ESU #1
2. ESU #1 Principal and Superintendent Meetings – Dr. Bob Uhing, ESU #1

Addressed ISLLC Standard:

Standard #3: A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.

Standard Indicators:

1. Interview the district budget director to identify how the institution supports curricular improvements in its resource allocation process.

ESU #1 Business Manager Interview
January 26, 2015

The months of December and January were filled with many opportunities for professional learning and were also filled with visits to schools in need of support throughout a variety of instructional areas. As schools were preparing for the conclusion of the first semester and the beginning of the holiday break, I chose to focus my efforts on taking time to have a conversation with the business manager of Educational Service Unit #1 (ESU), Lisa Salmon. Lisa is a very knowledgeable person in relation to the fiscal operation and building management practices of the Educational Service Unit. The interview/conversation with Lisa is/was directly related to one of the goals that I had set for myself at the beginning of the practicum learning experience, **Internship Goal #2: Building Management:** I will discover and apply appropriate, ethical, and logical

methods of the fiscal operation and management of the school system. Due to my educational setting in an ESU and not a school, I found it important to develop a better understanding of the fiscal operation and management of an ESU as it compares to the operations and management of schools in Nebraska.

When thinking about what would be most appropriate to ask Lisa in terms of fiscal operation and building management, I decided upon the following five questions:

- Based upon your current role within the ESU, how much time do you devote to the fiscal operation and management of the ESU? Daily? Weekly?
- Describe the process you go through in order to prepare, approve, and submit a yearly budget.
- How does the fiscal operation and management at the ESU level differ from the individual department level?
- In terms of your own preparation, what is something that you wished would have been shared with you in relation to school finance?
- What is the most important thing you have learned in relation to the fiscal operation and management of a school system (ESU) throughout your experience?
- For more in-depth information relating to the conversation with Lisa, please see the included note-catcher from our discussion at the conclusion of reflection two.

Throughout the conversation, Lisa shared many great insights related to the fiscal operation of an educational entity and also how appropriate fiscal operations can impact management responsibilities, decisions, and duties. I believe it will be very interesting to ask these same questions of my mentors that are in the public school setting and compare their practices, beliefs, and requirements to those of the ESU.

Fiscal operations and building management are two critical responsibilities that educational leaders are tasked with. Schools must operate within their means; while at the same time provide the best materials, supplies, conditions, and services it can with the

resources available. Reflecting upon my own experiences as an undergrad student, teacher, graduate student, and now as an employee of an ESU, fiscal operation and building management are two areas in which most teachers will not have a great deal of experience in. I have had the opportunity to discuss/examine the budget process, complete courses in which fiscal operation was the central theme, and be in charge of the budget for a science initiative in my ESU. It is important for prospective administrators and educational leaders to seek out opportunities for professional growth as it relates to fiscal operation and building management.

ESU #1 Principal and Superintendent Meetings
January 27 – 28, 2015

Working as a member of the Professional Services Team at Educational Service Unit #1 (ESU) has provided me with many opportunities for professional learning, service, and immersion in the field of education. I often times catch myself thinking, “I wish I would have known that while I was in the classroom” or “It would have been great to use that resource with my students.” Of the many wonderful opportunities that I am honored to have provided to me are our meetings with ESU #1 Principals and Superintendents. Throughout the year, we have administrator meetings in which Principals and Superintendents of schools within ESU #1 are invited in for a meeting consisting of updates, networking, and professional learning. During the week of Jan. 26 – 30, 2015 ESU #1 held two administrator meetings.

The Principal meeting at ESU #1 was a great learning opportunity for me due the opportunity to facilitate portions of the meeting and participate in professional learning with current principals. The meeting for principals focused on the areas of administrative

updates, MAP Assessment Resources and Strategies, and Robert Marzano's Instructional Leadership Series. The section relating to Instructional Leadership was a powerful learning experience, not only for myself, but for the participating principals as well.

Effective instructional leadership is about establishing and maintaining a culture conducive to teaching and learning. Hackman et.al. (2002) state, "Creating and sustaining a culture for learning and growth in schools is critical to student success" (pg. 98). The power of the meeting came in the form of instructional leaders sharing and modeling instructional coaching conversations with their peers. The principals that were asked to share during the meeting provided meaningful examples of how to have effective coaching conversations with teachers that are considered "high-flyers" and teachers that may be deficient in a district educational standard. Both instructional leaders demonstrated and communicated their cultural expectations of teaching and learning that is present throughout their schools.

Following the Principal Meeting on January 27, 2015 the Superintendent Meeting took place on January 28, 2015 at ESU #1. The Superintendent meetings have a little different feel than the Principal Meetings. During the Superintendent Meeting there was more of a focus on fiscal operation, legislation, and building management rather than direct instructional leadership. Once again, I had the opportunity to facilitate a portion of the meeting and participate in the professional discussions that took place throughout the meeting with superintendents. I found it very interesting to listen to and participate in the conversations and networking of the superintendents that were in attendance at the meeting. The discussion section of the meeting revolved around legislative updates, need for legislative action, and the need to communicate on behalf of the schools with state

senators. In addition, the generation of revenue was another topic that discussed at length. It was a very moving learning experience/opportunity to observe the difference in meetings and the difference that exists between principals and superintendents.

Reflecting back on all experiences that were document on my December – January Administrative Practicum Log, I am thankful that I had the opportunity to interview a business manager and participate in administrator meetings held at ESU #1. The educational position that I am honored to have provides me many rich experiences that I didn't receive while in the classroom. All of these opportunities and experiences enable me to grow as a professional, educator, and person.

References:

Hackmann, D.G., Schmitt-Oliver, D.M., & Tracy, J.C. (2002). *The standards-based administrative internship*. Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow Press, Inc.

Fiscal Operation and Building Management - ESU #1
Lisa Salmon – Business Manager, ESU #1
Jan. 26, 2015

Kellen's Notes

Lisa's Comments

1. Based upon your current role within the ESU, how much time to you devote to the fiscal operation and management of the ESU? Daily? Weekly?

- Blended together – responsibilities 50/50 split between fiscal and business management. Overall analysis.
- Some weeks is fiscal and some are personnel & policy
- Keeping track of new updates, laws: using school attorney to help stay on top of keeping policies up to date.
- Legislature has an impact on changing policies. Sometimes it is hard for us to figure out where we fit, since ESUs are a little different. Most times lawyers write policies for school district.
- ESU Publications – check with Tracey

- “On average I would say it is a 50/50 split (50% fiscal operation and 50% administrative/personnel/policy).

2. Describe the process you go through in order to prepare, approve, and submit a yearly budget.

- Year round job. As soon as one year is finished the next year begins.
- Review what is happening and what has happened in the past (2-3 years).
- Use last year's as a basis for the next year.
- Special Projects (MAP, Aimsweb, BYOC, etc...)
- Legislative issues (retirement, mileage rate, etc...)
- ESU is funded through school contracts, tax basis, and grants.
- Monthly overview – departments
- Review the information from the state auditor's office. Once a year audit
- Board approves the budget until Sept. board meeting and then submitted to the state by Sept. 20th.
- Fiscal Year Sept. 1 – Aug. 31st
- Talk/meet with administration regarding possible changes in the budget (personnel, programs, grants, etc.)
- Review the information from the State Auditor's office related to budget requirements.
- Set a deadline for all purchase order requirements from departments
- Budget needs to be nearly completed by the end of July with minor adjustments made the first part of August.
- The budget has specific deadlines for advertising the budget and getting it approved and submitted.

3. How does the fiscal operation and management at the ESU level differ from the individual department level?

- Set the entire budget for everyone/every department.
- Team leaders (Department Leaders) don't work with the budget
- Two different budgets for Special Ed.
- Only a certain amount of revenue can be carried over. ESU budget has to be extremely flexible – handle grants
- Technology hard to budget for. (Resources, software, etc...) Everything is moving towards tech/electronic.
- All requests for purchases are submitted to the Administrator for approval.
- Expenditures for the majority of departments are reviewed on a quarterly basis as well as the overall budget.

4. In terms of your own preparation, what is something that you wished would have been shared with you in relation to school finance?

- Politics involved...changes in legislation

- Paperwork is continuing... more now than ever before, due to legality. 25 – 30 documents for a new staff member.

5. What is the most important thing you have learned in relation to the fiscal operation and management of a school system throughout your experience?

- Flexibility – grants (Fiscal Agents), NDE asking for projects.
- Don't panic about the budgets as much as I used to.

Principal Agenda

Tuesday, January 27, 2014

Agenda

8:45-9:00 Arrival and Goodies

9:00-9:15 Wiki Update

Welcome/Update

- Statewide Visioning
 - 3 Initiatives
 - Blended
 - Data Dashboard
 - Teacher/Principal Evaluation

9:15-9:30 SPED Update

9:30-10:00 Technology Update

- Canvas Update

10:00-10:15 **BREAK**

10:15-10:45 Staff Development Update

- ALL Literacy - Year 2 and new Cohort
- MAP Regional meeting (April 17th Norfolk)
- Science Olympiad
- BYOC District MOU

10:45-11:45 MAP (Staff Development Team)

- Opening activity from December 9th
 - 20 min.
- Possible MAP Report (15 minutes)
 - Reading & Language Usage Report
 - Projected Proficiency Report

- MAP Resources (10 minutes)
 - Learning Continuum
- Principal Sharing

11:45-12:30 **LUNCH**

12:30-2:30 12:30-1:00 Nebraska Loves Public Schools

- Demo/Discussion

1:00-2:30 Principal Leadership & Instructional Coaching Training (Staff Development Team)

- Buddy Conversation
 - Sentence Starters
 - What have you implemented since the August 2014 Principal Meeting?
 - What were strengths of the process? Any challenges?
- Watch Teachers Teach
 - Instructional Feedback/Coaching
 - Role Play - Modeling
 - Struggling Teachers
 - Two Scenarios
 - Compliant Teacher
 - Teacher that doesn't agree
 - High Flyers
 - Possible:
 - View Jim Knight video of high flyer teacher and his coaching experience with them
 - Becky shares resources that provide support to Principals
 - Becky shares another short video clip
 - Principal partners:
 - One is the teacher; other the coach
 - Vice-Versa
 - Video Collaboration Tools
 - ESU Evaluation for today's Principal Meeting Evaluation

2:30 Wrap-Up/Dismissal

SUPERINTENDENTS MEETING
Wednesday, January 28, 2015

- 9:15 Coffee and Rolls
- 9:30 Welcome
 Special Education ~ Stuart Clark
- 10:00 Professional Service Team ~ Jim Hopkins, Chris Good,
 Amy Hill, Rhonda Jindra, Kellen Conroy
- 10:50 Break
- 11:00 Administrator's Comments
- Technology Survey
 - Career Academy Initiative
 1. Region III Principals Meeting (Karen Haase)
 - Statewide Initiatives
 1. BlendED
 2. Data DashBoard
 3. Teacher/Principal Evaluation
- Superintendent's Table Discussions:
- Advisory Council Report
 - Instructional Leadership
 - Technology Conference WSC (August 11)
 - NDE Waiver
 - Board Member Training
 - Legislation
 - Other
- 12:00 Lunch (Provided by ESU #1)